

UNH Town Feasibility Team  
Report to the Board of  
Selectmen  
June 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

# Town Feasibility Study Team

**Celeste Burns- School Board**

**Al Hume- Citizen at Large**

**Susan Noyes- SAU 45 Superintendent**

**Donna Kuethe- Recreation Department Director**

**Paul Punturieri- Selectman**

**Josh Bartlett- Selectman Alternate**

# Town Feasibility Study Team

- 1. History and Background**
- 2. UNH Report Recommendations**
- 3. Town Team Review**
- 4. Conclusions**
- 5. Suggestions**

# Background

## **April 2011- Blue Ribbon Commission Final Report**

“....the BRC believes that the indoor gymnasium space available to the citizens of Moultonborough is insufficient to serve the needs of the community. To address this need, the BRC recommends that the town pursue development of a facility that includes an indoor gymnasium, Recreation Department office, program and storage space that would be on existing school land or property adjacent to school facilities.”

# Background

- ***2013 Recreation Capital Request for \$17,500 for a “feasibility study” for a new gym***
- ***ABC Minutes Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> 2012: “This Committee strongly believes that prior to expending any taxpayer dollars for the proposed gym the taxpayers should first have the opportunity to weigh in on whether it is the will of the majority to build such a facility. We will propose to the BOS that they consider first adding a warrant article that will let the Community vote Yes or No indicating whether there is a majority interest in constructing a GYM.”***

# Background

## **2013 Town Meeting**

### **ARTICLE 10**

- Article 10-the “sense of the meeting” vote for a gym/ recreation facility per the Blue Ribbon Commission report.

**Passed by secret ballot 156 Yes to 55 No.**

# Background

## **2014 Town Meeting**

### **Article 13**

Requested \$17,500 for a site study for a gym/recreation facility as per the Blue Ribbon Commission recommendation

**Passed by secret ballot 171 Yes to 68 No**

**( Site study is nearly completed. Site chosen approved by joint Selectmen/School Board August 2014)**

# UNH Feasibility Study

## Settling the Question

- The University of New Hampshire team was engaged to perform a parks and recreation needs assessment for the Town of Moultonborough during the fall of 2014.
- The report was received by the Town Feasibility working group in January 2015
- The Town Feasibility Committee was formed on March 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 to review the UNH report and report back to the BoS



# UNH Feasibility Study

## Five Recommendations

1. *Extend partnerships between the Town and the MSD for school facility use, particularly in the afterschool and in the summer.*
2. *Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.*
3. *Provide sufficient financial resources for on-going operations and maintenance of existing recreation facilities, including outdoor athletic fields, town beaches, boat launches, and playground facilities*
4. *Explore options for the development and renovation of the Lion's Club building to accommodate senior adult meals and social programs/activities or divest from the property*
5. ***Prepare a warrant article for the development of a new indoor recreation center and gym facility.***

# What We Did

- **Twenty nine** specific action items were identified and reviewed by the Town committee
- We met bi-weekly more or less
- Two site visits conducted
- School/Recreation Subcommittee formed

## ***Recommendation # 1: Extend partnerships between the Town and the MSD for school facility use, particularly in the afterschool and in the summer.***

- Classroom space will be made available at the Academy and the Central School for the current half day summer camp programs on inclement weather days. (Gyms available after July 20<sup>th</sup>)
- Moultonborough Recreation Department has use of the MCS gym 4 days per week this year for the CATCH and drop in programs.
- Enviably School and Recreation Department relationship

### **Conclusion:**

*With the exception of further exploration of the possibility of full time summer camp programs, the committee believes at this time that we have extended the partnership between the two entities as far as possible.*

## ***Recommendation # 2: Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.***

- Meredith Recreation Center and the Moultonborough gyms on Sunday's was determined to be viable, but Moultonborough has chosen not to run these programs on Sunday.
- Camp Tecumseh gym was explored in the past and eliminated, but based on the UNH recommendation is in process of being re-visited.
- Two Site Visits:
  - ELAN Publishing
  - Immaculate Conception School

**Conclusion:** With the exception of the Immaculate Conception school, opportunities within our local lakes community for partnerships or shared space appear fairly limited and ***does not solve the core problem of adding gym space***. We see the Immaculate Conception School facility as a viable space that could possibly solve in the near term, gym capacity issues

***Recommendation # 2: Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.***





***Recommendation # 2: Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.***



***Recommendation # 2: Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.***





***Recommendation # 2: Explore partnership opportunities for indoor recreation facility use with local communities and organizations.***





***Recommendation # 3: Provide sufficient financial resources for on-going operations and maintenance of existing recreation facilities, including outdoor athletic fields, town beaches, boat launches, and playground facilities***

- The soccer and softball fields are being adequately addressed as the Town has made the commitment to maintain our existing facilities.
- Town committed to improve States Landing .
- States Landing Neighborhood meeting held in January 2013, the communities' desire to keep and improve that property was made very clear.

**Conclusion:** The committee believes that the intent of this recommendation has been met and is ongoing. The committee believes that no further action is required on this recommendation

***Recommendation # 4: Explore options for the development and renovation of the Lion's Club building to accommodate senior adult meals and social programs/activities or divest from the property.***

- The committee felt strongly that the Lions Club property was very highly utilized.
- It is premature to think in terms of any possible renovations/improvements until a decision has been made on the lease.

**Conclusion:** The Lions Club property fills many needs for the community and we disagree with the statement in the UNH report that the town gets little benefit from the facility. The facility can be improved to better utilize the space, but it is beyond the scope of this committee.

***Recommendation # 5: Prepare a warrant article for the development of a new indoor recreation center and gym facility***

**This is the challenge we present to the Board of Selectmen:**

***How to balance the needs of a minority in the community with the opinion of the majority?***

- It is clear from the UNH report that the majority of respondents did not favor building a new facility. A vocal minority however did.
- Yet Town Meeting voted to pursue development and again for a site study.
- It is also clear from the study that additional gym space is a true need for the community.

**We believe that we have validated that claim.**

## *Recommendation # 5: Prepare a warrant article for the development of a new indoor recreation center and gym facility*

### **Major Findings:**

- Demand for gym space exceeds capacity.
- The schools have one full NHIAA size gym and one elementary size gym and one multipurpose room. **We do not have three gyms.**
- Some of the space problems have been addressed and solved with the recreation department and school for half day summer camps on inclement weather days and after school programs, but the issue of full day camp has yet to be resolved and may very well not be.
- Extra wear and tear on the gym floor may require a second refinishing during the year and there is no time during the school year when that is possible. The school gyms have no significant down time.

# School Gym Capacity

## Committee reviewed school year gym calendar

- MCS and MA gyms utilized by both schools
  - 7 MCS Athletic teams use MA gym during school year
  - 20 MA athletic teams use MA gym during school year
  - Varsity boys and girls tennis use MCS gym March 23<sup>rd</sup> until snow is off outdoor courts 5 day per week 4:30-7:30pm
  - Other sports are also forced indoors to practice due to weather
  - At times gyms shared (e.g. JV and Varsity volleyball)

# School Gym Capacity

***Most school days both gyms are booked for some activity from 3:30-8:30pm.***

% Utilization ( M-F, 5 hours per *school day*) all scheduled activities( Rec. Dept. and Schools):

**MCS: 96.3%**

**MA : 97.2%**

\*School Day: when class is in session

# *Conclusions*

- The committee agrees that there is indeed a need for more gym space and that there is insufficient space available in the area to accommodate a comprehensive year-round Recreation Program for all ages.
- Changing demographics do not significantly impact the demand for gym space.
- The Recreation department should continue to work closely with other communities and organizations to increase capacity where possible.
- **It is time to settle this issue and move forward one way or another.**

# Conclusions

**We offer to the Board of Selectmen the following suggestions:**

- **Immediately explore leasing the Immaculate Conception School gym/field/program space**
  - **Will immediately alleviate the gym capacity issues.**
  - **NOT a long term final solution ( 3-5 years is anticipated) but...**
  - **Opportunity for “ lessons learned”**
  - **Create a following/ business model**
  - **Create partnerships**



# Conclusions

- **In the meantime:**
  - **Evaluate programs/participation and future space needs based upon use of the leased facility over the first 12 months.**

## **Not without some challenges:**

- **Doesn't answer the basic question**
- **Numerous issues/ logistics to be worked out during lease negotiation.**

# Today

1. Approve a staff/BoS work group to work through lease issues by end of August 2015 and present to BoS for consideration.
  - Paul, Donna K., Scott K., TA ( Town Counsel as required) others Ad Hoc
2. UNH Committee present our report to Joint BoS/School Board in August
3. Meet with Center Harbor BoS as a courtesy

# Next Steps

**(Assuming a lease agreement can be reached with the Immaculate Conception School)**

- A. Authorize a study that focuses strictly on the financing, construction cost options both hard and soft, ongoing operating expenses, and impact to the tax rate for various build scenarios. Without this information, it would be impossible for the Selectmen and voters to make an informed decision
- B. The Board of Selectmen should consider meeting with their counterparts in neighboring communities and determine if there is sufficient interest in their respective communities to ask for a financial investment to share the cost and use of a potential new facility.
- C. Based upon the outcome of the financial study, program evaluation and meetings with other communities, the Town should consider a warrant article to be put forward for 2017 **(2016 if lease agreement cannot be obtained)** Town meeting that is as clear and unambiguous as is humanly possible, **so that this issue can be finally resolved.**

The End???